

PROGRAM INTEGRITY (FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS & CLAIMS COLLECTIONS)

The Montgomery County Program Integrity Unit investigates cases of fraud, abuse and waste in public assistance programs. These programs include: Work First, Food Stamps, Child Daycare, Medicaid, Emergency Assistance, Low Income Energy Assistance, Special Assistance and other programs as needed. This service performs investigation of suspected "welfare fraud" and ensures collection of overpayments. It is a specially designed stewardship effort with goals to aggressively prevent, discover, and recover improper overpayments/over-issuance in Economic Service Programs. In addition to collecting monies after an overpayment has occurred, "Front-End" investigations are conducted at random and high-risk cases are monitored in an effort to prevent overpayments.

Anyone may call to report suspected fraud, abuse or waste in public assistance programs. If you choose to give us your name we will not disclose that information to the client. The number you should call for persons receiving benefits in Montgomery County, North Carolina is 910-576-6531.

Basis for investigation:

Most investigative referrals come from people other than MCDSS staff. Sources of a referral include but are not limited to the following:

- an anonymous phone call
- a letter from a concerned citizen
- information from other agencies
- computer data
- staff referrals from within the agency

The investigator must examine all factors, which may substantiate the existence of an erroneous payment. An overpayment occurs if someone receives public assistance and it is later determined the person was not eligible to receive that benefit, either because it was received as a result of fraud or because of a mistake in eligibility determination.

There are 3 types of over-issuance: client error, intentional program violation, or agency error. If the decision is to initiate investigative activity, it will then be determined whether the nature of the investigation is criminal, civil, or administrative.

For more information, contact:

Shelia Talbert, Food Stamp Unit Supervisor

Email: shelia.talbert@ncmail.net

Or

Melissa Griffin, Fraud Investigator

Email: melissa.griffin@ncmail.net